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1. A conference on the purchase of second-hand seagoing ships for the Russian Zone of Germany was held on 28 June 1951.

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Comment:

[REDACTED] see Annex.

the conference of 28 June 1951, 25X1

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1. Beginning with a statement by the State Planning Commission of 21 June 1951, State Secretary Strassenberger outlined the necessity of purchasing second hand vessels in order to save foreign currency and said that the Ministry of Foreign and Intra-German Trade should set up a commission composed of Messrs. Erben or Huf (Inu) for matters relating to freight, Salomon ** as specialist for navigation, and two experts, one for engineering and one for ship building who, if possible, should be detached from the German Ship Inspection and Classification Board. This commission would be responsible for the quickest possible purchase of approximately 50,000 tons with about 3.5 million pounds. The foreign currency needed would have to be made available by the Ministry for Foreign and Intra-German Trade. State Secretary Gregor commented that the State Planning Commission must approve of the export of certain goods bought for dollars or pounds. He said that the decision by the State Planning Commission to purchase foreign tonnage should be kept secret so as not to raise prices for ships. State Secretary Hollweber suggested that the ships should be bought individually but possibly in lots of at least four and should be bought in Sweden, Norway and Denmark which, he said, have relatively modern fleets. He stated that the fleet planned for represented the minimum tonnage needed.
2. Poland and Czechoslovakia were also interested in purchasing ships and negotiations on this matter should be initiated to avoid outbidding. The conference endorsed the resolution to join the Polish-Chinese Shipping Line. Two ships will probably have to be commissioned for service with this line. The conference also learned that Czechoslovakia proposed to the USSR the establishment of a joint shipping line. They believed that Poland should also be a partner to that line. They discussed the problem as to whether a joint shipping firm should be established as proposed by Czechoslovakia and decided that the individual countries should establish separate shipping firms which, however, should conduct joint shipping. They believed that an agreement on the flag to be flown could be reached inasmuch as the German flag would not be recognized internationally. They proposed that State Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Anton Ackermann should be contacted and requested to initiate negotiations with Poland and Czechoslovakia to create a contractual basis on which the three shipping firms involved could cooperate.
3. State Secretary Gregor proposed to employ small vessels of about 100 tons if possible for traffic with capitalistic countries. It was agreed that
 - a. The State Planning Commission, Traffic Department, inquire of the Engineering Department as to the possibility of building such vessels under the present drifter building program and with regard to engine requirements.
 - b. The Ministry for Foreign Trade and Intra-German Trade prepare for the State Planning Commission, Traffic Department, an analysis of the sales to capitalistic countries for 1950 and the development planned for the period from 1951 to 1955.
 - c. The Ministry of Traffic analyse the profitableness of these small vessels through the Directorate General, Shipping.

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